Claims

1. through 16. (Canceled)

17.   (Previously presented) A method for maintaining throughput in a data element, comprising the steps of:

receiving at a first element a clock and a first plurality of instances of data having a first bit-width as an input;

transmitting the clock and first plurality of instances of data having the first width to a second element, wherein the second element represents a first component of a media access controller;

operating on the first plurality of instances of data having the first width to produce a second plurality of instances of data having a second width;

transmitting the clock and second plurality of instances of data having the second width to a third element, wherein the third element represents a second component of the media access controller;

operating on the second plurality of instances of data having the second width to produce a third plurality of instances of data having a third width;

transmitting the third plurality of instances of data having the third width to a fourth element, wherein the fourth element represents a third component of the media access controller; and

operating on the third plurality of instances of data having the third width to produce a fourth plurality of instances of data having a fourth width.

18.   (Previously presented) The method according to claim 17, wherein the first width is 32.

19.   (Original) The method according to claim 17, wherein the second width is 32.

20.   (Original) The method according to claim 17, wherein the third width is 64.

21.   (Original) The method according to claim 17, wherein the fourth width is 64.

22.   (Original) The method according to claim 17, wherein the third and fourth widths are equal.

23.   (Original) The method according to claim 17, further comprising the steps of:
         receiving the fourth plurality of instances of data having the fourth width by a fifth element; and
         transmitting a fifth plurality of instances of data having a fifth width which is half of the fourth width.

24.   (Original) The method according to claim 17, wherein the first element if a physical layer device.

25.   (Original) The method according to claim 17, wherein the second element is a management control element.

26.   (Original) The method according to claim 17, wherein the third element is a receive function element.

27.   (Original) The method according to claim 23, wherein the fourth element is a receive control element.

28.   (Original) The method according to claim 23, wherein the fifth element is a system interface.

29. through 50.   (Canceled)